his entrance on French public life permitted them to forget that he was one of them. Incidentally it may be remarked that his determination to gratify the middle • class whenever possible played a considerable r61e in the grandiose scheme of public works conceived and partly achieved by him. The building of great canals, the perfection of highways, the lavish expenditure of public moneys for the administrative buildings which beautified the provincial towns while distributing the appropriations for these works among the inhabitants, the general control of these enterprises from Paris — all this enormously strengthened the hold which the chief magistrate had upon the country at large. He dressed, behaved, and talked, as far as in him lay, like a French burgher, scornfully and ostentatiously using the forms of society and diplomacy as baubles necessary just so long as they were useful, but holding them up to public contempt whenever that course served his purpose.

Much of the same policy was displayed in the official receptions held in the Tuileries. In the first place, the domestic life of the Bonapartes was carefully accented by the presence of the First Consul's wife and of his sisters with their families. No mistresses were ever allowed to flaunt themselves in public under either the Consulate or the Empire. The same standards of conjugal fidelity were to be supposed valid in the first family of the land as in those of the masses. Then, too, there was displayed a genial familiarity, sometimes even brusque and rude, like that prevalent among the middle class — the good-fellowship which they admired above every other quality. On high occasions the great officers of state with the diplomatic corps were arrayed in a circle like that customary in courts from immemorial times; but grand as they were, they had to put up with much the same treatment from the First Consul while